

Yellow Medicine County Board Minutes

October 14, 2003

Chairman Gary Johnson called this regular meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. with Commissioners Louis Sherlin, Lynn Anderson, Jane Remiger, and Ron Antony present. Administrator John Chattin, Auditor Carolyn Sherlin, Bethany Norgaard of the Marshall Independent, and Dan McGonigle of the Granite Falls Advocate Tribune were also present.

Several additional agenda items were offered including: insurance solicitations; acceptance of credit cards; employee negotiations; county officials' picture; investment policy; Planning Commission update; audit report questions; health insurance; the Clarkfield building; an employee resignation; and an easement request.

Two amendments to the September 23rd minutes were offered. Mr. Chattin asked that the cost for the administrator position be listed as an "estimated" cost and that the sentence stating that he "will remain an employee of Swift County" be eliminated, as the approved agreement states that he is an employee of Yellow Medicine County also. Under the Twin Lakes Project, the word "replace" was changed to "install", to reflect what is being done with the control structure.

10-14-03-01 Motion by Mr. Sherlin and second by Mr. Antony to approve the agenda with the additional items offered and to approve the minutes as amended. Carried.

Under the review of outside meetings, Mr. Anderson reported on the Southwest Regional Solid Waste Project where \$9,000 will be solicited from the county, Public Health, and a HRA public hearing. Mr. Antony covered the creative solutions committee meeting and an ICS meeting where meth labs, digital radios, the drug task force, and fire department fees were topics. Ms. Remiger attended a railroad meeting, dealing with economic development, and the museum board meeting. Mr. Sherlin reported on Prairie Waters, where regional meetings are being set, and Area II River Basin. Mr. Johnson reported on the AMC Region VI meeting in Olivia and Region 6W Community Corrections, where the budget and insurance are current issues. He also shared several correspondence items.

As the first meeting in November falls on the Veterans' Day holiday, it was rescheduled for Monday, November 10, 2003 starting at 9:00 a.m., preceded by the Creative Solutions Committee at 8:00 a.m.

A letter received from the Bureau of Mediation Services was reviewed.

Kathy Busack, Jail Administrator, and Sheriff's Deputy Wayne DeBlieck addressed the Board on a request to purchase a Taser gun, fax machine, and Guard 1 Plus system for the jail out of canteen funds. The total requested was \$7,049.45.

10-14-03-02 Motion by Mr. Anderson and second by Mr. Antony to purchase the items as requested and to encourage the solicitation of grants, if available. Carried.

Mr. DeBlieck reviewed a request to purchase 5 additional Taser guns and accessories for deputies at an approximate cost of \$5,010.00. Most of the cost will likely be funded through their vehicle forfeiture fund that currently has a balance of around \$2,100. They also have additional vehicles to sell.

10-14-03-03 Motion by Mr. Anderson and second by Mr. Antony to purchase the 5 Tasers using canteen and vehicle forfeiture funds. Carried.

Ms. Busack asked that Communications/Corrections Officers, who would like to volunteer their time, be allowed to work shifts for a fellow officer who is attending to an

out-of-state family emergency. The union has been informed and is in agreement with the proposal.

10-14-03-04 Motion by Mr. Sherlin and second by Mr. Anderson to allow the volunteering of shifts to cover time lost by the affected employee. Carried.

Ms. Busack also noted that the problems with erratic temperatures in the dispatch center have not been resolved. The building engineer will be contacted and Mr. Anderson and Mr. Chattin will try to resolve the problem with the engineer.

Larry Stoks, General Foreman, and Mike Schaffran, Engineering Tech III, reviewed the highway department engineering report. The living snow fence program got started late and has been slow, the aggregate tax is still under review, three state aid municipal projects have been added, unsafe intersections are being identified, and current projects were reviewed. Mr. Johnson commended the department for jobs well done this year. Mr. Schaffran also gave a trail project update.

Mr. Johnson called for a short break at 10:25 a.m. and reconvened at 10:35 a.m.

Kirk Adams, an attorney representing the City of Echo, presented a request for a utility easement on parcel 02-004-4020, which is tax forfeit land. Mr. Adams was asked to ensure that any pipe installed be set low enough so that any future regrading of the road would not require relocation of the pipe.

10-14-03-05 Motion by Mr. Sherlin and second by Ms. Remiger to grant the easement as presented. Carried.

Lois Bonde, Fiscal Supervisor, reviewed the final construction fund activity that showed \$23,227.24 left in the account and a shortfall balance of \$21,061.63 remaining out of a total \$77,180.88 in excess expenditures. Ms. Bonde was requesting action to close the construction fund, as no further activity is anticipated.

10-14-03-06 Motion by Mr. Sherlin and second by Mr. Anderson to transfer the \$23,227.24 balance to the revenue fund, cancel the remaining loan of \$21,061.63, and close the construction fund. Carried.

10-14-03-07 Motion by Mr. Sherlin and second by Mr. Antony to pay the claims as presented totaling: Revenue Fund - \$48,648.82; Road & Bridge Fund - \$91,643.31; and Ditch Fund - \$925.48. Carried.

A letter from Dave Brokke, Director of Yellow Medicine East Community Education, requesting some county land was reviewed. John Johnson, County Engineer, will be consulted prior to taking any action on the request.

A letter from the Yellow Medicine East Senior High School requesting designated parking spaces was deferred to the next regular meeting.

10-14-03-08 Motion by Mr. Sherlin and second by Mr. Antony to approve a request for \$1,100 for furnishings for the County Administrator's office. Carried.

The two bids received for the lease of the old landfill site were reviewed.

10-14-03-09 Motion by Mr. Sherlin and second by Mr. Anderson to award the landfill site lease to Howard Gatchell, Jr. for one year for \$210. Carried.

The government office building in Clarkfield was discussed. Mr. Chattin was asked to research a new lease or purchase of the building.

The need to consider alternated health insurance options was discussed. Mr. Chattin asked that the discussion be deferred as he wanted to establish a Labor Management Committee and that committee could deal with the issue.

Peggy Heglund, Family Services Director, informed the Board that Cynthia Cherveney has resigned her position and a separation agreement has been negotiated. Tom

Kramer, County Attorney, reviewed some of the terms of that agreement. A request to amend the agreement to allow for only contract assistance in the future was agreed upon.

10-14-03-10 Motion by Mr. Sherlin and second by Ms. Remiger to approve the separation agreement as amended. Carried.

10-14-03-11 Motion by Ms. Remiger and second by Mr. Antony to authorize Ms. Heglund to contact Merit System for their roster and seek a replacement for Ms. Cherveney. Carried.

Mr. Kramer presented a request to sell a house, to be moved, to Don Sebring for \$1 as part of a flood buyout agreement.

10-14-03-12 Motion by Ms. Remiger and second by Mr. Sherlin to sell the house to Mr. Sebring for \$1. Carried.

Mr. Kramer noted that a closed meeting will be needed soon to discuss litigation involving the Larson zoning complaint. It will be scheduled for the October 28th meeting.

Additional discussion on the Bureau of Mediation Services letter, involving a petition from AFSCME to represent courthouse employees, was held. Mr. Chattin is in the process of having the process clarified and certain dates changed to negate the need for a public hearing to identify potential union members. The Board will be kept apprised of any new information received.

10-14-03-13 Motion by Mr. Sherlin and second by Mr. Antony to approve a claim for 173.33 additional hours from Attorney Tom Kramer for \$11,266.45. Carried.

Mr. Sherlin asked why a brochure from an insurance company was included with paychecks and another insurance firm had their request to meet with employees rejected. Mr. Chattin suggested referring the issue to a Labor Management Committee, if formed, for policy recommendations. The Board agreed.

Mr. Sherlin also suggested that the County accept credit cards for payment of taxes and other fees. Mr. Chattin will explore the possibilities and report back to the Board.

Mr. Antony asked for a discussion on employee health insurance premium increases. This was deferred to discuss as part of union negotiation strategies.

Additional budget discussions were set for the November 10th meeting.

Ms. Remiger volunteered to look into scheduling a new picture of County officials. She also asked for a review of the County's investment policy. Mr. Chattin will review the current policy with applicable personnel and bring a recommendation back to the Board. Ms. Remiger also questioned how joint powers boards are determined for inclusion in the annual audit. Ms. Sherlin will look into that question.

Several applications have been received for the Planning and Zoning Director position. Ms. Remiger and Mr. Anderson will review the applications with Mr. Chattin and arrange for interviews.

Mr. Chattin asked that, per the sharing agreement, an Administrator job description be considered at the next meeting. He also reviewed the agenda format he was proposing.

10-14-03-14 Motion by Mr. Anderson and second by Mr. Antony to close the meeting at 11:55 a.m. to discuss County strategies for the upcoming collective bargaining agreement negotiations. Carried.

Mr. Johnson opened the meeting at 12:29 a.m.

10-14-03-15 Motion by Ms. Remiger and second by Mr. Antony to adjourn the meeting at 12:30 p.m. Carried.

Witness:

Gary Johnson, Chairman

Attest:

John Chattin, County Administrator